

February 6, 2003

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Commission Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. SW
CY-B402
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan supports SBC Ameritech's efforts to gain long distance approval in Michigan. It is time that Michigan consumers benefit from the valuable savings and choices that are available in other states.

It is our understanding that SCB Ameritech's effort to gain long distance approval in Michigan is contingent upon an open market for local competition. It appears to us that has occurred. More than forty companies now compete in Michigan for local customers and fourteen operate more than 10,000 local lines. Competitor's share of local access lines increased from 3.9% in 2000 to 12.8% in 2002.

According to a study by TeleNomic Research, Michigan consumers could save \$1 billion annually if SBC Ameritech is allowed to compete in the long distance market. These savings have occurred in other states where similar companies were allowed to compete. It only makes sense that consumers will benefit from increased competition.

We urge the Federal Communications Commission to approve SBC Ameritech's request. Michigan residents deserve to enjoy lower phone bills, one stop shopping, and more choices.

Sincerely,

Tom Czerwinski
Director

CC: Governor John Engler